

THANK YOU AMQUA for this great honor, and especial thanks to all my colleagues for writing letters in support of my nomination. I am truly sorry not to be present today but know Julio will do an excellent job representing me. The photograph Julio holds or hides behind shows me and Allan Ashworth, my best friend. He and I have collaborated on many projects exploring Quaternary paleoclimate topics in Patagonia. At times it was a wild ride, in the field and in the realm of science. But we discovered that we could resolve anything with several Pisco Sours.

Throughout my career in academe in Switzerland and France and before coming to the southwestern US I have been lucky for all the encouragement and support I received and all the opportunities that presented themselves. One of the most memorable opportunities presented itself on the day of receiving negative news about my continuing NSF funding. To counter my moaning, unforgettable Zimmie asked me if I had any other idea worth funding. From the top of my head, I suggested an interhemispheric paleoclimate initiative for the Americas. This is how PEP 1 started; it inspired several inter-American meetings leading to interhemispheric research projects. Ultimately PEP 1 became the template for other interhemispheric initiatives within the global scale PAGES-IGBP program.

All this would not have been possible without my friends of the Quaternary in this country. Thank you all.

Vera Markgraf